

United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- + Security Council, in Presidential statement on Friday, demands that Croatian forces withdraw from Maslenica bridge area and permit deployment of UNPROFOR, as agreed.
- + Bosnia and Herzegovina peace talks "almost within sight" of settlement; Constitutional Agreement for Union of Republics reached Friday; Bosnian Serb leader agrees to allow UNPROFOR troops to move into Bjelasnica area of Sarajevo's Mount Igman.
- + Secretary-General to respond shortly to letter from United States Secretary of State relating to air support for UNPROFOR.
- + Secretary-General condemns hijacking of UNRWA bus and deplores loss of life in attack on Israeli vehicles.
- + Special Commission on disarmament of Iraq installs monitoring cameras at Al Rafah and Al Yawm al Azim missile test sites; inspectors observe test firing at Al Rafah.
- + Fish Stocks Conference ends three-week session with agreement on need for new conservation regimes; delegates divided on whether to aim for new multilateral fishing convention or non-binding set of guidelines.
- + Racial Discrimination Committee meets in Geneva to discuss measures to combat discrimination; will again examine reports on situation in former Yugoslavia.

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The Security Council has demanded that Croatian forces withdraw from the Maslenica bridge area in southern Croatia, in accordance with an agreement reached on 15 and 16 July, and that they permit the deployment there of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). In a statement read out on Friday by its President, Sir David Hannay (United Kingdom), the Council warned of the serious consequences that would result from any failure to do so. It also demanded that the Krajina Serb forces refrain from entering the area.

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The Council reaffirmed its Presidential statement of 15 July, in which it urged the Croatian Government to refrain from reopening the bridge unilaterally in the absence of agreement between all the parties concerned. Such a move, the Council had said, would jeopardize the international community's efforts for confidence-building measures between the parties. It would also jeopardize efforts by the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia and UNPROFOR to achieve a negotiated settlement. Following that Council statement, the parties had agreed on the Croat withdrawal from the area.

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Negotiations to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina are gaining momentum and a settlement is almost within sight, according to a United Nations spokesman. A Constitutional Agreement for the Union of the Republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which will form part of the overall settlement, was reached in Geneva on Friday. A number of drafts had been discussed, and amendments approved by all three parties.

President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban had a meeting today "in which they were talking about maps", the spokesman said. Meanwhile, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen, Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, had a number of bilateral meetings.

The spokesman went on to say that Mr. Karadzic had entered into an agreement permitting United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) troops to move into the Bjelasnica area of Mount Igman near Sarajevo. UNPROFOR Force Commander General Jean Cot was studying the practicalities of such a move.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali is studying a letter from United States Secretary of State Warren Christopher relating to the provision of air support for the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General was expected to respond to that letter very shortly.

The United Nations was in constant contact with UNPROFOR Force Commander General Jean Cot regarding the necessary arrangements, the spokesman said. Earlier today, Special Representative Thorvald Stoltenberg had reiterated that the decision to use air power, in accordance with Security Council resolutions, rested with the Secretary-General, following necessary consultations with the Council.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has condemned an incident in which a bus belonging to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was hijacked this morning in Gaza Town. The bus was later crashed into vehicles belonging to the Israeli

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authorities, killing one person and wounding several others. The Secretary-General deplored the loss of life and the injuries caused in the incident.

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Inspectors from the United Nations Special Commission on the disarmament of Iraq today observed the country's first missile test at the Al Rafah site since the recent dispute over the installation of monitoring cameras there. The inspectors photographed the test stand prior to the firing of the rocket, received answers to questions about the purpose of the test and reviewed test data afterwards.

Iraq agreed last month to observation of its missile testing programme as part of an interim solution to the crisis which arose over the Commission's plans to install monitoring cameras at the Al Rafah and Al Yawm al Azim test sites. The Commission has now installed fully operational cameras at both sites. Furthermore, plans for the installation of a back-up communications systems are well advanced.

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The United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks has completed its three-week session, with agreement on the urgent need for new conservation regimes at the bilateral, subregional and regional levels. However, delegates were divided as to whether the Conference should ultimately produce a new multilateral fishing convention or a non-binding set of guidelines.

In concluding remarks on Friday, delegations urged that States cooperate in developing conservation and management regimes encompassing the needs of both coastal and distant water fishing States. During the session, the Conference heard that the serious depletion of straddling and highly migratory fish stocks had threatened to create new confrontations among States.

The Conference will reconvene for two meetings next year -- from 14 March to 1 April and from 15 to 26 August, subject to approval by the General Assembly.

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Government measures to combat racial discrimination in the Republic of Korea, Zambia, Iran, Nigeria, Viet Nam, Kuwait, United Kingdom, Germany and Tonga will be considered by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination at its forty-third session, being held in Geneva from today until 20 August.

The Committee will meet in closed session to discuss the situation in the former Yugoslavia, and will review implementation of the Convention in Burundi, Rwanda and Papua New Guinea, where there have recently been reports of ethnic conflict. Also under consideration will be the programme of action

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for a possible third decade to combat racism and racial discrimination, to begin in December.

Opening the session this morning, the Chairman of the Committee, (Luis Valencia (Ecuador), called on the 18 experts serving on the body to redouble their efforts, in view of the increase in discrimination and racially motivated violence in many regions. He also invited them to consider the conclusions of World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna last June and the way these relate to eliminating racial discrimination.

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